

# St. Mary School

*A Tradition of Excellence... A Century of Success*

## Preschool Handbook

2011-2012



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[www.stmaryschoolmelrose.org](http://www.stmaryschoolmelrose.org)

# WELCOME



Welcome to St. Mary's Preschool! Our goal is to serve the needs of all children according to the mission and philosophy of St. Mary's School. We strive to provide a warm, supportive and developmentally appropriate environment for your child. The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with the policies and programs of our preschool. We strive to make the transition between home and school a positive experience for you and your child. Daily communication and a sense of trust between parent and staff are a vital component to our program.

## MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary's School is dedicated to enhancing in each student a strong sense of Catholic values and enriching each child academically in a safe, caring environment.

## PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary's Preschool philosophy is based on the belief that children need time to experience their childhood through exploration and discovery. Saint Mary's Preschool strives to provide the young child with an environment that maximizes this exploration and discovery. Projects are planned, but attention is paid to individual needs. Children process knowledge by using their whole self to gather information, therefore the more involved the experience, the greater the potential for learning. Opportunities are provided for children to take responsibility, make decisions and learn through play.

St. Mary's Preschool is strongly aware of the importance of a child's positive feeling of self worth. Each child brings his/her own experiences to us each day; it is our role to nurture and develop his/her sense of self.



## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum is based on the developmental theories and methodologies of early childhood education. The program is designed to help each child acquire the skills, knowledge and behaviors needed to develop cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically.

Units are planned which integrate language/literacy, math, science, small/ large motor development, art and music/movement.

A wide variety of materials and activities are provided; children are encouraged to expand their use and discover new ways of doing things. Children will be given the opportunity to work in a variety of settings; independently, cooperatively, one-to-one, small and large groups.

Projects and themes are planned but flexibility is given in response to the individual needs and group dynamics. We emphasize creative expression and problem solving. Emphasis is also placed on developing positive and enjoyable relationships with other children.

Religion is taught using Sadlier's series for preschool children "Discovering God's World". During our group sessions we will be learning about the gifts God gives us, as well as the importance of being a follower of Jesus. The children are taught that being a friend of Jesus means to treat others with kindness, respect and love.

The program strives to build a partnership with parents as a way to further develop the child's cognitive and emotional skills.



## **SAYING GOODBYE**

Sometimes young children have difficulty with separation. It is our experience that it is best to always say good-bye with a kiss, hug or a wave! Be firm, but friendly about leaving. If your child whines or clings, prolonging the good-bye will only make it harder for yourself and your child. Be assured that we will be there to comfort your child once you leave. After you have established a good-bye routine, your child will get to know what to expect, and the good-byes will be less difficult. Moreover, your child's separation anxiety will diminish.

Good feelings are contagious. Please know that separation adjustment is normal; we are here to help you and your child ease through it.

## REGISTRATION

**Age Requirements:** Children must be three years old by September 1 and toilet trained.

**Official Documents:** A child entering for the first time must have a copy of his/her birth certificate, all immunization records and baptismal records (if applicable).

## SESSIONS

Half day: five days a week from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Full day: five days a week from 8:00 AM to 2:25 PM

## ARRIVAL

Arrival procedures are as follows:

- Teachers will greet you and your child at the Preschool entrance doors at 8:00AM (PreKA door is on the church side of school, PreKB door is on Grove St. side closest door to the dumpster)
- Your child will then be escorted, by a teacher, to the classroom.

## DISMISSAL

- Teachers will dismiss students from the Preschool entrance doors. (PreKA door is on the church side of school, PreKB door is on Grove St. side closest door to the dumpster)
- Half day program will be released at 11:00 AM and full day program will be released at 2:25 PM.

Only those authorized by a parent or guardian may pick up a child at this time. Your child's teacher must be notified if someone other than a parent is picking up your child. This person must be listed on the Dismissal Release form or a written note must be given to the teacher in order for your child to be dismissed. This person will also be asked to show a license.

**All parents are asked to fill out and return a Dismissal Release Form by the first day of school.**

**Children picked up later than 2:30 PM will automatically be placed in the After School Program; parents will be responsible for fees that are accrued at this time.**



## SNACK

Each day the children will have a morning snack. During the warmer weather, we will also have an afternoon water or juice break. We encourage children to bring a nutritious snack and drink. Some examples of nutritional snacks are;

milk, juice, water

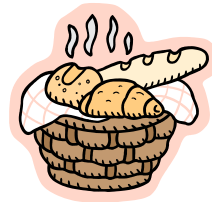
fruit, vegetables

crackers and cheese

Please do not send any candy, soda or anything in a glass container. Snacks should be sent in a lunch box labeled with your child's name.

## LUNCH

Children in the full day program must bring in a lunch each day. Milk is available each day for a cost of \$.50. Milk is ordered on a yearly basis. Please be advised that there is no refrigeration available for children's lunches.



## CLOTHING

Active indoor and outdoor play is a regular part of our school day. Therefore, please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for running, climbing and other physical activity. The children will also work with paints and other messy materials, so they should wear clothes that are easily laundered. Sneakers or shoes with rubber or gum soles are recommended; flip-flops, high heels and sandals without a heel strap ***should not*** be worn. We will be going outside every day, unless it is raining, snowing or below 32 degrees, so please dress your child appropriately.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child needs a complete change of clothes that will stay in school. All children's personal belongings (clothes, coats, lunch boxes, school bags, etc.) must be labeled. We ask that children not wear jewelry to school except pierced earrings (studs only). They are apt to remove, lose or break them.

## **YEARLY THEMES**

Each month the Preschool classrooms will focus on a specific theme. We encourage the children & parents to also be involved in this learning experience by exploring these ideas and places at home through books, trips or just talking. We always welcome a book, toy or idea that your child would like to share with his/her classmates about their knowledge. The themes:

**Sep. Oceans**  
**Oct. Trees**  
**Nov. Corn**  
**Dec. Dinosaurs**  
**Jan. Volcanoes**  
**Feb. Edgar Degas**  
**Mar. Ireland**  
**Apr. Farms**  
**May Gardens**  
**Jun Kites**

## **PERSONAL TOYS**

St. Mary's Preschool provides ample playthings so we ask that children do not bring in toys from home. Each child will have several opportunities, throughout the year, to share their favorite things. If your child has a special "security need" please discuss it with the teacher.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Children may share their special day by bringing in a favorite book that will be shared with the class. At the end of the month Hoodsies will be brought in to celebrate all children's birthday for the month.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY/PUBLICITY**

We often take pictures of the children as they work or participate on special events. These pictures may be displayed around the school, placed on the website, or printed in brochures, newsletters, or the local newspaper. If you do not wish your child to be in these pictures, please notify the school in writing.

## **CORI FORMS**

Any parent wishing to volunteer for school activities must fill out a CORI form at the beginning of the year. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

## **NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

If it should be necessary to close school because of weather conditions, a message will be sent to the home phone, cell phone, and email account listed on a student's file via the Connect-Ed telephone system.



## **VOLUNTEER GRANDPARENTS**

St. Mary's School is excited to participate in the Volunteer Grandparent Program sponsored by Catholic Charities. "Leone" will be helping us in Preschool this year with the Preschool students.

## **BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

St. Mary School offers both a Before and After School Program. The Before School Program runs from 7:00AM to 8:00AM; the After School Program runs from 2:30 PM to 6:00 PM. Additional information may be obtained from the school office.

*We look forward to a happy, fun-filled year!*





## **St. Mary Preschool Staff**

<b>Pastor</b>	<b>Fr. John Sullivan</b>
<b>Principal</b>	<b>Mrs. Cynthia Boyle</b>
<b>Admin. Assistant</b>	<b>Mrs. Deborah Mobilia</b>
<b>School Nurse</b>	<b>Mrs. Terry Pedicini</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Mrs. Kathy Sacco</b> <b>Ms. Kristin Monahan</b>
<b>Teacher Assistants</b>	<b>Mrs. Jill DiFilippo</b> <b>Mrs. Linda Simko</b>



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